

WYCOMBE'S 96th MINUTE WINNER KILLS ILFORD

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ILFORD were robbed of a Rothmans Isthmian League point by a goal scored in the 96th minute of this match at the famous Loakes Park on Saturday, in which there were no stoppages for injury.

The press were unanimous that referee Mr. J. Godfrey of Watford had justification in adding time for an incident that involved a minute's delay by Mark Lazarus when taking a free kick.

But he could hardly justify adding six minutes.

This victory, that meant three points to Wycombe instead of a point for a draw, could well mean that they will now win the league championship on a disputed goal.

Ilford held their own with the league leaders, in spite of being without McDermid, Butterfield, Day and Bookman, who was pressed into service as substitute.

Tony Turley was also playing at well below his usual pace and effort because of an injury.

It was therefore a great encouragement to the visitors when they went in front after 37 minutes. Paddy Betson put a long ball up for Turley that was intercepted by Keith Mead and put back to Maskell. But the 'keeper had come out too far, and with Turley following up, the ball, Maskell and Turley all ended up in the back of the net.

Ilford, the more impressive and much more dangerous, kept looking for goals. But it was not Adrian Eglite's day, and the home keeper was able to keep

out two shots that could have been goals.

After the break some of Wycombe's set pieces down the slope looked very dangerous. They had a physical advantage over their opponents, but Ilford stuck to their task and blunted this spell of all-out pressure.

With half an hour to go, the home side sent on their second highest goal scorer Steve Perrin for midfield player Phil Wood.

By TED MILES

This brought the desired result for Wycombe, but the visiting defence were partly to blame for conceding the equaliser.

International Larry Pritchard was allowed to get round the back of the defence to flight a perfect cross to an unmarked Keith Searle, who gave Paul James no chance with a header after 63 minutes.

Ilford found new life and fought back, and it was during this time that Lazarus tried a spot of gamesmanship to give Micky Bennett the chance to adjust his boot. He was spoken to by the referee, but the incident lasted a minute at the most.

With 15 minutes left Jeff Bookman replaced the half-speed Turley in the battle that swayed from end to end.

Peter Anderson headed off the Ilford line while Peter Drabwell threatened twice at the other end.

A well-taken corner by Lazarus found the Ilford striker in front of goal but in the ensuing melee Wycombe cleared in the 92nd minute.

Still the game went on, and six minutes after normal time substitute Steve Perrin, standing unmarked, met a cross from Searle to put the ball in the net.